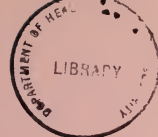


BUCKFASTLEIGH URBAN DISTRICT



ANNUAL REPORT  
ON THE HEALTH OF THE DISTRICT  
FOR THE YEAR 1972

PRESENTED BY  
THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

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## AREA No. 5 · SOUTH WEST DEVON

*DARTMOUTH and TOTNES Municipal Boroughs*

BUCKFASTLEIGH  
KINGSBRIDGE  
SALCOMBE

} Urban  
Districts

KINGSBRIDGE  
PLYMPTON ST. MARY  
TAVISTOCK  
TOTNES

} Rural  
Districts

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*With the Compliments of the  
Medical Officer of Health*



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URBAN DISTRICT OF BUCKFASTLEIGH

Annual Report on the Health of the Area for the Year 1972.

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## BUCKFASTLEIGH URBAN DISTRICT.

### Report on the Health of the District for the Year 1972.

#### p r e f a c e

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I present herewith the Report on the Health of the District during 1972, drawn up along the lines suggested in Department of Health & Social Security Circular 1/73, dated January, 1973. Included in the Report is the Report of your Public Health Inspector.

#### Vital Statistics.

Deaths exceeded Births by 10 persons reducing the population estimate to 2680 persons. There were 36 births giving a Standardised Rate of 17.8 per thousand population which is well above the National Rate of 14.8. There were the same number of deaths as last year, namely 46 in number, giving a Standardised Death Rate of 11.5 per thousand population. This compares favourably with the National Rate of 12.1. There was only one infant death, due to an unavoidable cause.

#### The Ashburton Sewer.

In June, in connection with new road works, the Ashburton Sewer where it crossed the River Dart en route to the Kilbury Works severed, causing pollution of the River. The South West Devon Water Board were very concerned because of their water extraction scheme at Littlehempston and took precautions to counteract any contamination of the raw water before it was fed into supply. The Road Contractors' attention was drawn to this trouble and remedial measures were applied.

#### Cyanide Pollution in a field.

In March a report was received that a patch of grass the size of a billiard table, in a field, had been killed by cyanide. Soil analysis confirmed the presence of a trace of cyanide on the surface. The site was within a 100 yards of a factory that produced cyanide waste and stored it in a lagoon. Core samples of soil below ground level between the lagoon and the cyanide patch failed to reveal the presence of cyanide, so it is considered improbable that the cyanide patch arose by cyanide travelling underground from the lagoon and popping up in the field. Soil samples taken elsewhere in the field, and water samples from a nearby stream, were negative to cyanide pollution.



The cyanide patch has been fenced off and covered over to prevent access by children and cattle. The nearby factory has now installed a cyanide disposal plant and removed the lagoon. No further trouble has arisen.

Again I wish to thank all Members of the Council and Staff for their help and co-operation during the year.

John Wildman.

Medical Officer of Health.

September, 1973.



PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT 1972.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

John Wildman, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., M.F.C.M.

DEPUTY MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

Mary E. Budding, M.B., B.Ch., B.Sc., D.P.H., M.F.C.M.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR (Also Surveyor).

G.T.W.Allen, F.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.  
Council Offices,  
Town Hall,  
Buckfastleigh.

Tel. Buckfastleigh 2333.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Chairman

Councillor M.G.Tolchard.

Chairman of the Council

Councillor Miss F.M.Axford.

and

Rev. J.W.Timms, Messrs. A.W.Thompson, J.A.West, E.W.Pinney,  
and Dr. M. Wigram.

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M.O.H. Clerk.

Miss G. Prowse.

Tel. Plymouth 36644.



## S E C T I O N   A .

### VITAL STATISTICS AND GENERAL STATISTICS 1972.

Table 1.

Figures for 1971 are shown in brackets.

#### POPULATION:

##### Estimated Mid-Year Population of Buckfastleigh Urban District.

2,680 (2,690)

Natural increase or decrease	...	...	- 10	(- 11)
Migration in or out	...	...	Nil	(+261)
Total increase or decrease	...	...	- 10	(+250)

#### GENERAL STATISTICS:

##### Area of Buckfastleigh Urban District in Acres.

1,365

##### Number of Inhabited Houses according to Rate Books (1st April)

1,043 (1,033)

Number of Houses per acre	...	...	0.764	(0.757)
Number of Persons per acre	...	...	1.963	(1.971)
Number of Persons per house	...	...	2.569	(2.604)
Dwellings owned by the Council	...	...	395	(395)

##### Rateable Value of District (1st April).

£105,095 (£104,080)

##### Sum Represented by New Penny Rate.

£1,002 (£968)



# VITAL STATISTICS AND GENERAL STATISTICS 1972.

Table 2.

Figures for 1971 are shown in brackets.

## BIRTHS:

Standardised Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population ... 17.8 (17.3)

Area Comparability Factor for Births ... ... 1.33 (1.33)

### Number of Live Births

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Total</u>	23	13	36
Legitimate	22	12	34
Illegitimate	1	1	2

Number of Still Births ... 0 ... 0

## DEATHS:

Standardised Death Rate per 1,000 Population ... 11.5 (12.8)

Area Comparability Factor for Deaths ... ... 0.67 (0.75)

### Number of Deaths

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>All Ages - Total</u>	27	19	46
<u>Deaths of Infants under 1 yr.</u>	1	0	1
Number under 4 weeks of age	1	0	1
Number under 1 week of age	0	0	0

Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births. ... 29.0 (29.0)

## COMPARISON WITH RATES FOR ENGLAND AND WALES:

Birth Rate 14.8 (16.0)

Death Rate 12.1 (11.6)

Infantile Mortality Rate 17.0 (18.0)  
(Infants under 1 year of age)



PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Table 1.

<u>DISEASE</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Age Group in Years</u>					
		<u>Under</u> <u>1</u>	<u>1-</u>	<u>5-</u>	<u>15-</u>	<u>25-</u>	<u>Over</u> <u>65</u>
Tuberculosis (Lungs)	2	0	0	1	0	0	1

Table 2.

<u>DISEASE</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Incidence by Quarters</u>			
		<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>4th</u>
Tuberculosis (Lungs)	2	0	2	0	0

---

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS 1948 & 1951.

No action was necessary under the National Assistance Acts of 1948 and 1951 for the removal of persons in need of care and attention, and no persons were buried in accordance with Section 50 of the 1948 Act.



# CAUSES OF DEATH DURING 1972.

							<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Total</u>
B19(1) Malignant Neoplasm, Buccal Cavity etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
B19(2) Malignant Neoplasm, Oesophagus	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
B19(4) Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
B19(5) Malignant Neoplasm, Larynx	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
B19(6) Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
B19(10) Leukaemia	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
B19(11) Other Malignant Neoplasms	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	1	4
B23 Anaemias	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
B46(5) Other Diseases of Nervous System	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	1
B27 Hypertensive Disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	0	2
B28 Ischaemic Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	7	12
B29 Other forms of Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	3	5
B30 Cerebrovascular Disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2	3
B46(6) Other Diseases of Circulatory System	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
B32 Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	0	2
B46(7) Other Diseases of Respiratory System	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	1
B34 Peptic Ulcer	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
B38 Nephritis & Nephrosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
B46(11) Diseases of Musculo-Skeletal System	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	1
B42 Congenital Anomalies	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
B45 Symptoms & Ill Defined Conditions	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	0	1
BE47 Motor Vehicle Accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	1
BE48 All Other Accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	1
TOTAL ALL CAUSES	...	...	...	...	...	...	27	19	46



## SECTION B.

### GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

#### 1. Hospitals.

A General practitioner hospital with 15 mixed medical and surgical beds is situated in Ashburton. Other hospitals which serve the district are Newton Abbot Hospital and Torbay Hospital. There is a maternity unit at Broomborough Hospital, Totnes, to which many of the Buckfastleigh mothers are admitted for their confinements.

#### 2. County Council Health Services.

Under the National Health Service Act, 1946, the County Council provides the following services:-

Domiciliary midwives, home nurses, health visitors, supervisory care of expectant and nursing mothers and children under five, ambulance services, vaccination and immunisation procedures.

One district nurse/midwife works in the district together with a health visitor and a clinic nurse. A child welfare clinic is held twice a month and a health visitor for the area is in attendance.

#### 3. Social Services (Devon County Council).

The Area Director of Social Services at the Family Welfare Centre, Pomeroy House, Bridgetown, Totnes, Telephone Totnes 3665, is responsible for providing a Social Work Service to schools, the Occupational Therapy Services and residential homes and centres.

#### 4. Laboratory Service.

Bacteriological examinations of pathological specimens and samples of milk, water and ice cream are carried out at the Public Health Laboratories at Exeter and Plymouth. The chemical analysis of water is undertaken by public analysts at Exeter, and also by the South West Devon Water Board.

#### 5. Health Centre.

This provides surgery accommodation and clerical help for two General Medical Practitioners as well as clinic facilities for Devon County Council Services.



#### 6. Mass Miniature Radiography.

Facilities were available at Totnes and Newton Abbott for the general public to visit the Mass Radiography Unit, which called regularly every fortnight at those towns.

#### 7. Family Planning Service.

Clinics are held each two months at Buckfastleigh Health Centre, on the 3rd Tuesday beginning at 2 p.m.

The Organising Secretary is Mrs. Bidmead, 10, Hambury Park, Buckfast, Telephone Buckfastleigh 2523.

#### 8. Cervical Cytology.

A Cervical cytology clinic for the early detection of cancer in women is held approximately once a month at the Buckfastleigh Health Centre, Telephone Buckfastleigh 2534. All women are eligible to apply for a test.

#### 9. Meals on Wheels.

'Meals on Wheels' continue to be cooked at Buckfast Abbey by kind permission of the Lord Abbot. The demand for meals has increased to 18 meals twice a week. Distribution is carried out by 8 drivers and 6 other helpers and these volunteers do a marvellous job of work in spite of the number of volunteers having diminished from over 20 some six years ago. Distribution of the meals could be seriously jeopardised if any of the remaining helpers were away due to illness or holidays. 'Meals on Wheels' provides an essential social service. Not only does it provide nourishment, usually to elderly folk who find it difficult to cook a proper meal for themselves, but the visits help to mitigate the evils of loneliness from which such folk often suffer. There never was more truth than in the saying that states "Many hands make light work" and this is most applicable to helpers with the 'Meals on Wheels' service. Miss P.S.K..Davies (Buckfastleigh 2592) is the Organiser.



## SECTION C.

### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

#### 1. Refuse.

The remarks for last year still apply, especially with regard to the increase in the volume collected as new houses continue to be built and occupied, and in the summer the number of caravanners continues to increase.

#### 2. Sewerage.

Anticipating future development a duplicate 12" sewer was laid alongside the re-alignment of the existing sewer where it passes under the new trunk road (A 38).

#### 3. Sewage Disposal.

As reported last year, the exclusion of surface water resulted in a greater concentration of the sewage and a worsening of the effluent. This was contrary to what had been expected, but facing the facts the Council immediately gave firm instructions to their Consulting Engineers to prepare a scheme for further improvements at the Kilbury Works.

#### 4. Industrial Effluents.

Consequent upon the disappointment resulting from the failure of the exclusion of surface water to produce a better effluent, the Council instructed their Consulting Engineers to check upon all factory effluents and also to see if the trade agreements were capable of revision to bring them into line with modern requirements.

One factory straightway engaged its own Consultants and instructed them to prepare a scheme for modernising their pre-treatment plant.

Another factory, producing a toxic metallic waste, had a completely new pre-treatment plant installed to neutralise its waste. In this case the effluent does not enter the public sewers but is discharged to a private watercourse.

#### 5. Caravans.

There are two licensed caravan sites in the district, one Council owned for seasonal tourists, and one privately owned for all-the-year residential use. The owner of the residential site has intimated that he will be closing his site next year.

In view of the increasing demand for spaces the Council are seeking to acquire further land adjacent to the present site.

Additional toilet facilities plus a laundry unit have been provided in the Council park.



## 6. Swimming Pool.

During the past year the swimming pool has been re-lined.

Due to extensive roadworks the least supplying water to the swimming bath was too muddy to use, and for some months was not even flowing, so that the pool had to be filled by Town water.

As the roadworks were so near to the pool, the dust resulting from the excavations very soon made the pool very turbid, and in spite of the recirculation we had to change the water more frequently. In view of this the Council has authorised the installation of a filtration plant for the coming year.

## 7. Rodent Control.

The past year has shown again that the rat and mouse population is at a low level.

## 8. Post Control.

There was no significant change in the pest situation, but there was a problem of feral cats on the caravan park. It seems that some cats were made pets of by the children on the sites and were "handed on" through the season, but after the last caravan had gone we had about a dozen homeless cats on the site. During the winter we had feral cats on the refuse tip, no doubt migrants from the caravan site, as they are only about a quarter of a mile apart.

## 9. Water.

Water is supplied by the South West Devon Water Board, and we are indebted to the Manager and Director of Water Supplies. of the Board for the following information covering their Area:-

### Bacteriological Analyses 1972.

	<u>P.H.Labs.</u>	<u>S.W.D.W.B. Lab.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Unsatis- factory</u>
Dec.71 - Jan. 72.	157	-	157	4
Jan. - Feb.	112	-	112	2
Feb. - Mar.	152	-	152	nil
Mar. - April	88	-	88	nil
April- May	148	-	148	nil
May - June	181	44	225	1
June - July	168	17	185	2
July - Sept.	293	51	344	3
Sept.- Oct.	209	20	229	2
Oct. - Nov.	134	12	146	1
Nov. - Dec.	117	8	125	2
	<u>1752</u>	<u>152</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>17</u>



10. Offices, Shops & Railway Premises Act, 1963.

Two new premises were registered during the year, The overall picture is one of small businesses managed by the owner and his family.



## SECTION D.

### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

#### 1. Food Premises.

These were all visited at least once during the year, and were found to be up to standard.

#### 2. Food Hygiene.

Cleanliness of premises and of the workpeople employed continues to be satisfactory.

#### 3. Food Condemnation.

Electrical faults resulted in the contents of three deep freeze cabinets having to be condemned.

The surrendered packets were punctured and then immersed in disinfectant and buried on the refuse tip.

#### 4. Meat Inspection.

No meat was inspected during the year as the two butchers now buy from an out-of-town abattoir. They both continue to have their slaughterhouses registered and licensed.



## SECTION E.

### HOUSING.

#### 1. General

Of the 1,121 inhabited houses in the district 421 were owned by the Council. Some 37 $\frac{1}{2}$ %.

#### 2. Improvement Grants.

Discretionary grants were approved in respect of 14 private properties amounting to £12,131.

Standard Grants were approved in respect of 7 private properties amounting to £1,350.

Two Qualification Certificates were granted.

#### 3. Unfit Housing.

The Medical Officer of Health made an Official Representation in respect of a single house, No.74, Fore Street.



## SECTION F.

### FACTORIES ACT, 1961.

The following is a summary of information required in respect of the year 1972. A total of 73 inspections was made in respect of 33 premises listed in the Factories Register.

#### Part I of the Act.

#### 1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health.

##### (i) Factories without Mechanical Power.

(Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6)

Number on Register	...	...	...	3
Inspections	...	...	...	7
Written Notices	...	...	...	0
Occupiers prosecuted	...	...	...	0

##### (ii) Factories with Mechanical Power.

(Section 7)

Number on Register	...	...	...	28
Inspections	...	...	...	38
Written Notices	...	...	...	0
Occupiers prosecuted	...	...	...	0

##### (iii) Other Premises under the Act.

(Section 7)

(Electric Stations, Institutions, Sites of Building Operations, Works of Engineering Construction, but excluding Outworkers' Premises).

Number on Register	...	...	...	3
Inspections	...	...	...	51
Written Notices	...	...	...	0
Occupiers prosecuted	...	...	...	0

#### 2. Cases in which Defects were found.

See table overleaf.



2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were made
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			by H.M. Insp.	To H.M. Insp.	
Want of cleanliness (S.1.)	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S.2.)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temp. (S.3.)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (S.4.)	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6.)	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary conveniences (S.7.)					
a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
b) Unsuitable or defective	-	-	-	-	-
c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-



PART VIII OF THE ACT.

OUTWORK.

(Sections 133 and 134)

There is a small Firm in the Town which makes artificial flies for anglers. After training, the work is given out to about 15 females. This work does not appear on the list specified by Order under the Act.

Nature of work	Section 133			Section 134		
	No. of out-workers in August list required by Sec. 133(1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending list to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in un-wholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Wearing apparel (making)	-	-	-	-	-	-





